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(Text does not include verbatim comments)

Introduction

- Good afternoon.
- Best Seminar Title award!
- Danger of being last speaker, especially after not having been present all day. Will try to avoid being too redundant. Hopefully, no one else has talked about IDEM's initiatives, as such, so I have a fighting chance!
- So, without further adieu, let me review some of our efforts to create some voluntary programs to enhance Indiana's efforts to monitor for and address lead and mercury in the environment.
- Like almost every environmental issue, progress requires partnering, and I know you have already heard about many collaborative efforts under way, but I would like to take the time to recognize and thank many of our partners on projects involving heavy metals in our environment, most of whom you have already heard from today!
 - The United States Geological Survey,
 - The Indiana Geological Survey,
 - The Indiana State Department of Health,
 - Indiana's solid waste management districts,
 - The Indiana Household Hazardous Waste Task Force,
 - Eli Lilly and Company,
 - Cinergy and
 - The Marion County Health Department.

Focus on Children's Health

- One of our major initiatives at IDEM to address heavy metals in the environment, and their direct impact on health, has involved our children's health initiative.
- Five years ago, Governor Frank O'Bannon asked all state agencies what they could do to help children in Indiana reach their full potential. Our answer to that

question was to start a children's health initiative called "Protecting Children from Environmental Threats."

- The threats we have focused on include lead, mercury, pesticides/pests and asthma irritants. For our purposes today, I will focus on lead and mercury, but if anyone is interested in the other topics, I would be happy to provide information on those also!
- It looks like you have already heard today the ill health effects of exposure to mercury and lead: such exposure can cause damage to our nervous system, kidney and liver.
- We have many exposures to these two toxins in our daily environment, such as from
 - Peeling lead-based paint,
 - Lead in drinking water pipes in older homes, and
 - Mercury in common consumer products, including fever thermometers, kids' shoes, thermostats, fluorescent bulbs, mercury switches, batteries, some blood pressure gauges and some antibacterial solutions.
- And I am sure you already know, or have learned today, that children are especially vulnerable to environmental pollutants. Pound for pound, they eat more food, drink more water and breathe more air than adults.
- Young children face more exposure risks than adults do; partially due to the proportionality issue, and partially because they are more likely to ingest things most adults have lost a taste for: dirt and paint chips.
- Through IDEM's "Protecting Children from Environmental Threats" initiative, we are working hard to educate parents and caregivers to help ensure our children grow up healthy and reach their full potential.
- Through this first-of-a-kind program, we are bringing together environmental and health professionals at the state and local levels to address environmental health issues facing young children. Let me tell you about the different components.

5-Star Program for Child Care Facilities

- About 100,000 Hoosier children attend day-care in Indiana, in facilities such as day-care centers, ministerial facilities and homes.
- Through the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program for Child Care Facilities program, facilities are educated on, and rewarded for, reducing the risk from such environmental threats as lead paint, mercury, asbestos, carbon monoxide, radon, and pesticides in their facilities.

- A vital component of this program is education – both of center operators and employees, and the parents and families of the children who attend those facilities.
- So far, more than 75 facilities have participated in this program. Bragging rights: The program was the first of its kind in the nation and received the Council of State Government's Innovations Award in 2001.

LEAD for 2000

- Specifically relating to children's exposure to lead, IDEM and the State Department of Health coordinated the "Lead for 2000" campaign.
- In adults, lead can cause high blood pressure. However, in children the consequences of lead exposure can be much more dire: Lead can cause severe neurological and learning disabilities in young children—especially children under the age of six, because the blood brain barriers have not yet formed.
- Through the Lead for 2000 campaign, we trained more than 150 lead assessors who have performed more than 1300 free lead assessments at homes and child care facilities throughout Indiana.
- Children in homes in several counties, including Marion, Lake, Saint Joseph, Allen, Elkhart and Vanderburgh, were found to have elevated blood lead levels – especially in older neighborhoods. Local governments in these priority counties have received grants totaling \$106,000 for lead awareness, outreach and education.
- IDEM recently gave five "mini-grants" of \$5,000 for outreach, to educate families with children at risk and help reduce potential exposure to lead. Receiving the grants were:
 - Action Inc. of Delaware and Grant Counties,
 - Community Action of Greater Indianapolis,
 - And the Allen, Howard, Marion, and St. Joseph County Health Departments.
- Again, you can see that education is a large component of our lead initiatives. Whenever assessors go into homes to do an assessment, they provide educational materials on how to reduce exposure. And, of course, the above grants are for the specific purpose of educating the caregivers of children at risk.
- The tips we share are simple but important:
 - **Wash hands often.** This prevents children from inhaling or ingesting lead dust that they might pick up on their hands.

- **Clean windowsills with soap and water.** It is a common place for paint dust to collect, which can be breathed in. Also, where there are paint chips, pick them up with a broom to keep from creating paint dust.
- **Use cold water for cooking and drinking and let it run for 30 seconds** to make sure any lead deposits are flushed out.
- **Have your children tested** for lead. Call the Indiana family help line at 1-800-433-0746 for information, or speak with your family physician.

Lead Contaminated Sites

- In addition to pollution prevention and reduction techniques for lead sources, we are making progress in addressing lead concerns at sites such as Continental Steel in Kokomo, which you heard about earlier today.

Mercury Awareness Program

- There is also a great deal of effort being made to address mercury in the environment.
- One of our most successful efforts to date has been our **mercury collection** efforts. Working with the Indiana Household Hazardous Waste Task Force, Indiana's solid waste management districts, communities, businesses and others, we are accomplishing a great deal.
- Thanks to the partnership of Cinergy, Eli Lilly and Company and many others, IDEM has been conducting free Thermometer Exchanges since April of 2000. Indiana residents can bring their mercury fever thermometer to the exchange location and trade it for a digital thermometer.
- More than 45 exchanges have been held at various locations around the state.
- More than 8,800 mercury fever thermometers and more than 172 pounds of elemental mercury have been collected from Hoosier households.
- **School Pledge:** Because almost every school, regardless of size, has mercury somewhere in the building, we began the Mercury in Schools Pledge Program. Items commonly found in a school include thermometers, thermostats, barometers, and fluorescent tubes. Through the program, schools:
 - Take an inventory,
 - Pledge to purchase non-mercury containing devices and
 - Pledge to phase out and recycle existing mercury containing devices.
- To date, we have 56 schools working with us in the effort.

- Through our **Mercury Thermostat Reduction and Recycling Pledge Program**, heating and air conditioning companies can recycle, free of charge, discarded mercury-containing thermostats.
- A total of 165 suppliers and contractors participate in the program. The Thermostat Recycling Corporation, which is the entity that collects the used thermostats, ranks us fourth in the nation in the number of mercury thermostats we send to them.
- Newest program: **Dental Mercury Pledge Program**, we are working to collect liquid mercury from Indiana dentists. With our partners at the ISDH, the Indiana Dental Association and Indiana's Solid Waste Management Districts, we are working to create an environmental pledge program for Indiana dentists by the summer of 2003.
 - Also, a sweep is planned for the month of October.
 - And,
 - Because the burning of medical waste often results in the emissions of mercury, we are providing **outreach for hospitals that operate incinerators**.
- We are providing compliance and technical assistance for meeting the 1999 federal emission requirements.
- Indiana assisted in developing a **national mercury pledge program for hospitals**. Hospitals participating in this program receive the "Making Medicine Mercury Free Award."
- Indiana very much involved at the national level in all of these efforts and active participant in **Quicksilver Caucus**.

Mercury deposition study

- Two years ago, IDEM awarded a grant to the United States Geological Survey that is allowing the two agencies to participate in a joint study of atmospheric deposition of mercury in Indiana.
- Marty Risch with USGS spoke earlier about this study, so I will spare you redundancy.
- However, if you missed Marty's talk, details on the study and preliminary numbers are on the IDEM Web site.

Steel Mill Initiative

- Finally, let me tell you a little bit about our Steel Mill Initiative, as I know you have been hearing about mercury emissions from this industry.
- In 1998, the three largest IN mills, Bethlehem Steel, Ispat Inland, and U.S. Steel, signed a voluntary agreement with U.S. EPA and IDEM to reduce the use of mercury at their facilities.
- As a part of this pledge, they have been working together to inventory the mercury at their sites, develop a plan to reduce the usage and phase out mercury items.

Conclusion

- Today's technology enables us to work in a number of ways to address exposure and contamination. Indiana is working hard to incorporate scientific findings into policy.
- As a result of strengthened environmental monitoring and public partnerships, we have made tremendous progress in our efforts to protect both public health and environment.
- Our efforts can only succeed through the continued partnerships discussed today and the commitment of all of our citizens. So, thanks to each of you for your interest in, and efforts towards, educating yourselves and others about these risks.